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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Update 8 – 4 p.m.

## City's quick response due to low flow alarm system

The city's newly installed low flow alarm alerted the city to the River Road forcemain sewer break on Monday, July 3. The low flow alarm was installed after the Hewlett's Creek spill last year.

The alarm triggered at just after 5 p.m. Monday, and the city immediately set into motion a response plan that included getting pumper trucks on site to retrieve spilled wastewater and bringing in a contractor the city had already arranged to have on standby for just such emergencies.

The forcemain broke after a contractor for a local utility hit it while excavating to install underground utilities. The portion of forcemain that was hit is located at the intersection of River Road and Shipyard Boulevard, at the entrance to the state Ports facility.

According to state statute, contractors are required to submit requests to excavate into a call center coordinated by N.C. One Call Center. Utility companies and municipalities such as the city of Wilmington are to respond to those requests by marking where underground utilities such as power and sewer lines are located. They are to identify where the underground utilities are with spray paint and/or flag markers so contractors know where not to dig.

After investigating Monday's incident, the city has determined that it clearly marked where the forcemain was located and has both photographic and written evidence to support this.

"After careful review of what took place, we are confident we did what we needed to do to indicate where this pipe was located," said City Manager Sterling Cheatham. Cheatham went on to say that city crews are now focusing on cleaning up the spill site and consulting with the manufacturer of the forcemain pipe to make sure the repair now in place is appropriate for long-term.

Clean up efforts will continue today and tomorrow, along with water quality testing. As a precaution, the city recommends that citizens not come into contact with the water.

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For more information, contact city Public Information Officer Malissa Talbert at 342-2736 or 470-8720.